

NEWS RELEASE

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TENNESSEE ARTS COMMISSION HOSTS REGIONAL POETRY OUT LOUD AT OVERTON HIGH SCHOOL IN MEMPHIS

Six area high schools compete in national recitation contest

NASHVILLE, TN. – **Anita Norman** from Arlington High School in Arlington, and **Kelsea Tate** from Ridgeway High School in Memphis were named regional winners for West Tennessee Poetry Out Loud competition in Memphis on Saturday, February 4. Six area high school students competed for two positions to represent their region in the statewide competition on Saturday, March 31, 2012 at the Tennessee State Capitol in Nashville.

Poetry Out Loud is a national recitation competition in which, students compete on a four-tier structure. There is a school-wide competition, regional, state finals all of which culminates in the national competition in Washington, D.C. on May 13-15, 2012.

The Tennessee Arts Commission has hosted Poetry Out Loud for six years, and this year 36 schools from around the state will compete in three regionals throughout the month of February.

Overton High School for the Creative and Performing Arts was the setting for this year's regional competition in West Tennessee. The competition was adjudicated by Jerre Dye, artistic director of Voices of the South; Jane Roberts, reporter for

the *Commercial Appeal*; Catrina Guttery, business manager / artists relations of Memphis Music Foundation; and Lisa Lynch, public relations and marketing manager of Playhouse on the Square.

Students and teachers from Brighton High School, Arlington High School, St. Benedict at Auburndale, Ridgeway High School, Sheffield High School and Overton High School have been working throughout the year in their English, drama, creative writing and theater classes and programs to prepare for the regional competition which gives students a hands-on experience with contemporary and classic poetry. Funded in part by the National Endowment for the Arts and Poetry Foundation, Poetry Out Loud gives teachers the tools to introduce their students to a broad spectrum of poetry, so students may explore their literary heritage.

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